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# *Declaration of Truth*

TO

**BENJAMIN HOADLY,**

One of the High Priests of the Land,

AND

Of the Degree whom Men call

**B I S H O P S.**

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By a Ministering Friend, who writ to *Tho. Bradbury,*  
a Dealer in many Words.

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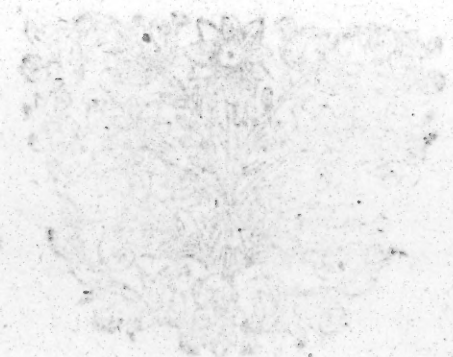
DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES  
TO  
BENJAMIN HOBBS  
ONE OF THE HIGH PRIESTS OF THE LAND

OF THE TEMPLE OF THE MIND

BRITISH



MUSEUM  
BY A FORTHRIGHT FRIEND, WHO WROTE TO THE  
A DOCTOR IN MANY WORDS



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# A Declaration of TRUTH

T O

## Benjamin Hoadly,

**B**E it known unto thee, Friend *Benjamin*, that albeit we, who are the People of the Lord, own thee not in thy proud Titles, neither in thy Office, as thou exercisest the same ; neither can we treat thee with that Distinction wherewith Men distinguish thee, forasmuch as we do not acknowledge the same (as thou dost) to be of God : Nevertheless I shall treat thee respectfully in this thing, whereof I am now to commune with thee, seeing thou hast uttered much Truth with thy Mouth, and therefore hast moved much Wrath of wicked Men against thee.

And would'st thou, *Benjamin*, faithfully pursue the Light which I perceive is in thee, and which shineth abroad far and nigh : I say, would'st thou act according to the Light which I plainly see is in thee, thou should'st have Praise ; for thou hast verily *done worthily*, in that thou hast restored the Kingdom to them to whom it sole-



ly appertaineth, and hast dethroned the Usurpations of wicked Men, who have unrighteously set themselves up in the Throne of Jesus.

Verily, *Benjamin*, thou hast done worthily, in that thou hast appeared for the Cause of our God against the Unrighteousness of Men; and hast not been afraid, neither discouraged, when they have risen up against thee with great Wrath: And I am sent unto thee to declare in words of Seriousness, that thou should'st not faint, neither be dismay'd, for that many of the Faithful Servants of God are with thee in this thing, and do say unto thee *God-speed*, which thou knowest we are forbidden to say unto the ungodly, and unto Men who are not led in the right way.

Having thus given my Testimony to thy good Works, I communicated my Intentions to Friends: Among these *Aminadab*, a righteous Man, fearing not the Face of Men, but fearing God only, *said unto thee*, that his Heart is likewise with thee in the thing which thou hast said; *to wit*, That the Power of Men, or the Laws of Men, have no Authority to interfere with, or to join their Power with the Right Hand of Jesus, who allows no Partners in the Throne of his Glorious Kingdom on Earth, any more than he will admit Partners in the Throne of his Glorify'd Kingdom in Heaven. Moreover, he hath sent Messengers unto me, saying, Speak thou *Ebenezer* in the Ears of *Benjamin Hoadly*, and say unto him, Fear not the Face of Men, tho' many rise up against thee, saying, Thou lyest, thou lyest; for verily thou lyest not *Benjamin*, but hast spoken the Truth, and it shall prevail.

*Aaron*, a Man filled with Knowledge, and a Teacher of Wisdom, sent also unto me, saying, *Ebenezer*, the things which *Aminadab* our Friend hath communicated unto thee concerning *Benjamin Hoadly*, are things which  
favour



favour of Truth ; and thou wilt do well to speak unto the said *Benjamin*, saying, Fear not *Benjamin*, for wise Men are with thee, and good Men are with thee ; and verily they be better Men, and more in number, that are with thee than those that be against thee.

I might name unto thee many Friends, endowed with Wisdom and Knowledge, who speak well of thee, for that thou hast spoken the Truth with great boldness, and hast not feared to utter it, even in the hearing of the King, and we may not doubt but that our Lord the King will be thy strong Helper against all thine Enemies, and will assist thee to silence the Gain-sayers of thy Doctrine ; for verily, the King is an unfeigned Friend unto the Truth, and would be willing that all Men should walk in the path to Heaven, howbeit he may not be enlightened equal to our Friends, which nevertheless we hope he may hereafter be, if God seeth it good to bring his Heart over unto us.

And albeit Friend *Benjamin*, thou art not yet joined unto the faithful Servants of God our Friends, but that thou for a little while remainest, as to some things, in the Darkness of the World ; yet forasmuch as thou joinest with us in the Truth, we embrace thee willingly, nothing doubting but that the Heavenly Light which has shone out in thy Word, will hereafter shine in thy Heart, and thou wilt come over more perfectly unto us Friends, who are already established in the Truth.

And I am the farther confirm'd in the truth hereof, in that thou hast so boldly acknowledged the Truths of God, being the same professed by us, and for the sake whereof we are inclin'd to think well of thee ; and seeing I have informed thee that thou hast so exactly taught what we in Principle believe, and closely adhere to in Practice, I shall let thee know, *Benjamin*, how exactly thou agreeest with us who have received the Truth,

Truth, and that we hold and believe all the Truths that thou hast taught, and that also even in the same words in which thou hast declared them, or but with small variation thereof, as thou wilt farther be informed, when thou shalt read the following Heads, which are a part of the Principles of Truth, or of those things about Doctrine, which we Friends do most surely believe and receive; to wit,

Concerning Religion, we believe, that it is only the Spirit of the Lord that makes Men truly Religious; and no Man ought to be compelled to or from any exercise or practice in Religion, by any outward Law or Power, but every Man ought to be left free, as the Lord shall perswade his own mind, in doing, or leaving undone this or the other practice in Religion; and every Man of what Profession in Religion soever, ought to be protected in Peace; provided himself be a Man of Peace, not seeking the wrong of any Man's Person or Estate.

And we believe, That to reprove false Opinions and unsound Doctrines and Principles seeking to convince them that oppose themselves, by Exhortation or sharp Reproof, by word or writing, ought not to be counted a breach of the Peace; or to strive about the things of the Kingdom of God, by Men of contrary Minds or Judgments, this ought not to be punished by the Magistrates and their Laws: for we believe that the outward Laws and Powers of the Earth are only to preserve Mens Persons and Estates, and not to preserve Men in Opinions: neither ought the Laws of the Nation to be laid upon Mens Consciences, to bind them to or from such a Judgment or Practice in Religion.

And we believe, That Christ is, and ought only to be Lord and Exerciser of Mens Consciences, and his Spirit must only lead into all Truth.



And we believe, That Obedience and Subjection in the Lord belongs to Superiors, and that Subjects ought to obey them [in the Lord] that have rule over them; and that Children ought to obey their Parents, and Wives their Husbands, and Servants their Masters in all things, which is according to God, which stand in the exercise of a pure Conscience towards God: But where Rulers, Parents or Masters, or any other, command or require Subjection in any thing which is contrary to God, or not according to him, in such cases all People are free, and ought to obey God rather than Man; and we believe, that herein God will justify them, being guided and led by his Spirit in all that which is good, and out of all that which is evil.

Herein Friend Benjamin, thou mayest see, as in a Vision of clear Light, that thou art in the same way of Truth with us, and I have Freedom to own thee therein; for verily thou hast clearly testified unto the Truth which we believe, in that thou hast likewise said, even in our Words, That every Man ought to be left free as the Lord shall perswade his own Mind.

Now Benjamin let it not seem Strange unto thee, that I say unto thee, that these are our own Words; for I speak therein with Truth and Soberness, referring thee for Testimony thereof unto a little Book published more than Forty and Five Years since, by a Body of our Friends, and Signed by John Crook, a Man endowed with a Spirit of a sound Mind, and also by three other Ancients, who were likewise Men of true Wisdom. This Book is Entituled, *Truth's Principles*, &c. in which Book the Words which I have written unto thee above, are to be found.

Searching likewise thy Book, Benjamin, which thou hast made Publick, by the Command of the King, I find



find these Words, which I hope thou hast learned from our Friends above written ; to wit, That the Language of the Word is, *That knowing the Terrors of the Lord, we should perswade Men* ; but that the Language of the Mens Conduct, who profess to succeed Him that Taught the other, is, That having the Terrors of this World in their power, they do not perswade Men, but *force their outward Profession against their inward Perswasion.*

Verily thou hast spoken, *Benjamin*, as one having the Light of the Spirit ; and this is a Truth which the Men of the World cannot be able to resist. Verily, Friend *Benjamin*, we agree with thee, that the Kingdom of Jesus is not of this World, and that the Laws of his Kingdom likewise, and the Rewards and Punishments of those Laws, are suited to the end of those Laws, and to the Nature of his Kingdom : Nay, *Benjamin*, I will use thy Words as thou hast used the Words of wise Men, who went before thee ; to wit, “ The Laws of this  
“ Kingdom, therefore, as Christ left them, have nothing  
“ of *this* World in their view ; no Tendency, either to  
“ the Exaltation of *Some*, in worldly Pomp and Dignity ;  
“ or to their absolute Dominion over the Faith and Re-  
“ ligious Conduct of *Others* of his Subjects ; or to the  
“ erecting of any sort of *Temporal Kingdom*, under the  
“ Covert or Name of a *Spiritual One*.

“ The *Sanctions* of Christ's Law are Rewards and  
“ Punishments. But of what sort ? Not the Rewards  
“ of this World ; not the Offices, or Glories, of this  
“ State ; not the Pains of *Prisons, Banishments, Fines,*  
“ or any lesser and more moderate Penalties ; nay, not  
“ the much lesser *Negative Discouragements* that belong  
“ to *Humane Society*. He was far from thinking that  
“ These could be the Instruments of such a *Perswasion*,  
“ as He thought acceptable to God. But, as the Great  
“ End of his Kingdom, was to guide Men to Happiness,  
“ after

“ after the short Images of it were over here below ;  
 “ so, He took his *Motives* from that place where his  
 “ *Kingdom* first began, and where it was at last to end ;  
 “ from those *Rewards* and *Punishments* in a future State,  
 “ which had no relation to this World : And to shew  
 “ that his *Kingdom was not of this World*, all the *Sanc-*  
 “ *tions* which He thought fit to give to *His Laws*, were  
 “ *not of this World* at all.

I confirm these thy Positions and Doctrines, *Benjamin*,  
 with my Voice, and give thee Praise therefore, for ve-  
 rily thou art worthy of Praise, not only that thou hast  
 spoken boldly the Truth, but for that thou hast done it  
 in the Face of the Adversary, and hast not been afraid.  
 And Blessed be the King, into whose Heart God hath  
 put it, to frown upon the Gainsayers ; and albeit they  
 were gathered together against thee, he hath scattered  
 them, and hath sent them away discouraged.

Neither do I flatter thee with my Lips ; for Friends  
 are not Guilty of such things, and it would be in me a  
 great Iniquity ; but I speak to thee in Sincerity and in  
 Truth, and my Thoughts are moved to utter the Words  
 of my Mouth ; for verily thou hast dethroned and pul-  
 led down that Man of Sin, the *Son of Perdition*, which  
*has Exalted himself* ; thou hast valiantly Encountred the  
 Tribe of ungodly Priests, who have by an Injurious  
 Usage of the Lord's People, for many Years usurped the  
 Authority of King Jesus, and have exercised Dominion  
 over the Souls who they have had committed by Men  
 unto their Charge ; these they have Tyrannized over,  
 and have Cruelly Persecuted under pretence of Authori-  
 ty from Jesus ; albeit Jesus the true King and only Head  
 of all true Believers, as thou hast well said, hath given  
 no such Authority unto them.

Now concerning Ministers I will tell thee what Friends  
 do surely Receive and Believe, and I will not give thee



my own words, but the words of the said Declaration of *Truth's Principles* mention'd before ; to wit,

“ Such Minifters as are made by God, who are sancti-  
 “ fied by his Word and Power, who have freely received  
 “ perfect Gifts from God, and fo by the Spirit and  
 “ Power of God are fent forth into the World, to turn  
 “ the People from Darknefs to Light, and from the  
 “ Power of Satan to the Power of God ; who freely  
 “ Minifter unto others, without coveting any Man's  
 “ Gold, or Silver, or Apparel ; not seeking theirs, but  
 “ them : Warning every Man and teaching every Man  
 “ in all Wifdom, that they might prefent every Man  
 “ perfect in Chrift Jesus : fuch as minifter from the Spi-  
 “ rit, and have the Word of God abiding in them ; who  
 “ are never unprovided, but at all times and feafons,  
 “ and in all places, do fpeak and declare the Truth, as  
 “ they are moved and inftructed, and as the Spirit of  
 “ Truth doth give them utterance ; Such Minifters we  
 “ own, and have in great efteem.

This we furely do Believe, *Benjamin*, and thou haft done worthily in concurring with us, and in that thou haft taken away from thofe who call themfelves *Mini- fters*, all that Power and pretended Authority which they affume, and which we fay they ufurp contrary to the Nature of the Office of a Minifter, which we alfo Declare to be only to Teach and Inftruct, not to Terrify and Affright the People of the Lord ; and herein we know, that altho' thou wilt offend them, and they will fhew great Wrath againft thee therefore ; yet, *I fay*, we know thou haft fspoken the Truth againft them, and I concur with thee therein ; nay, I acknowledge thee and own thee therein, becaufe thou haft concurred with us in the Truth, not doubting but thou wilt be farther in- lightned, in the Lord's due time, to joyn with Friends in all the words of Truth which we Profefs.



I must farther say in thy behalf, Friend *Benjamin*, that thou hast spoken Excellent words of Witdom in defiance of the Men of high Notions, who are of the Tribe who thou didst belong to in former time ; for thou hast taken the People out of their hands, and hast set them free from the mock Terrors of Vain Men, such as they call the Artillery of the Church ; which we that know the ways of Truth, are acquainted with the Deceitfulness of ; and as I Glory in thy Words thereupon, I shall repeat them in thy praise as followeth, to wit,

“ Not the least Tittle of Salvation or Damnation  
 “ depends upon the Will of weak Men, but all upon  
 “ God and your Selves ; Humane Benedictions, Humane  
 “ Absolutions, Humane Denunciations, Humane Excom-  
 “ munications, have nothing to do with the Favour of  
 “ Anger of God : But are Humane Engins, permitted to  
 “ work (*like other Evils*) by Providence.

These are Excellent Things spoken with Wisdom, and thou shalt have due praise of the same : Likewise hast thou Batter'd down the strong Holds of Satan, in thy words on the same Subject.

“ In all your *Religious Concerns*, that effect your Eter-  
 “ nal Salvation, and your Title to God's Favour, your Rule  
 “ is plain and evident *Christ* is your sole Law-giver, and  
 “ your sole Judge, as to those Points. The *Papists* may  
 “ Excommunicate the *Protestant Non-jurors* : The *Non-*  
 “ *jurors* may Excommunicate the *High-Church-Men*, as  
 “ well as all other *British Protestants*, who pray for King  
 “ *George* : These again may Excommunicate, Unchurch,  
 “ Unchristian, those whose Church Government, or Wor-  
 “ ship, differ from their own ; and those again may Exer-  
 “ cise the same *Spiritual Discipline* wherever their Ter-  
 “ rors can extend themselves : They may thus scatter  
 “ Damnation about ; playing, as one would think, as the  
 “ *Man* in the *Proverbs*, with Firebrands and Death, and

“ saying, *Are we not in Sport* ; and they may every one  
 “ Flatter themselves, that this *Power of the Keys*, shuts  
 “ out from the *Catholick Church* here, and from the  
 “ *Kingdom of Heaven* hereafter : But it is in truth only  
 “ from themselves that they can *Excommunicate* : And  
 “ this is very often their own *Crime*, and their own  
 “ *Loss* : but *Christ* himself and his *Apostles* have plainly  
 “ told you *what* it is, and *what* alone that shall cut you  
 “ off from him ; and declared a *Curse* upon *all* who  
 “ *Preach any other Gospel*, and consequently, who add  
 “ any thing as absolutely necessary to his Favour, which  
 “ he hath not made so.

To these Truths of thine, such I call them, as thou  
 hast been honoured to speak them first among Men, I  
 bear my Testimony, and the good People, the People  
 of the Lord, despised by Men, of whom I am the mean-  
 est, have born their Testimony many Years ago : I say,  
 with thee, that the boasted Terms which those Men  
 made wicked use of, such as *Regular* and *uninterrupted*  
*Successions*, *Authoritative Benedictions*, *Excommunica-*  
*tions*, *Absolutions*, &c. are *Vain Words*, mere *Terrors*  
*of Men*, not the Terrors of the Lord, *Niceties* and *Trifles* :  
 And therefore it is that we disown the whole Te-  
 nor and Substance of the Canons and Institutions of that  
 which they prophanelly, as I doubt not thou wilt in time  
 be led by these Lights to do also ; I Despise and Con-  
 temn all the pretended Authority of that which they  
 weakly and impertinently call, a Power derived from  
*Christ* and his *Apostles* : I know no Ministers but such  
 as is before described ; as for *such as are brought up at*  
*Schools and Colleges*, and so made Ministers by the will  
 of Man, who have not freely received perfect Gifts from  
 God for perfecting of the Saints, but denies Perfection,  
 and so denies the Ministers Work, neither do minister  
 freely, but seek for Gain from their Quarters, and will  
 not



not Preach without a price ; who are not sanctified by the Word of God, but plead for a continuance in Sin while People walk upon the Earth : Such as Minister from the Letter, and not from the Spirit ; who cannot Preach except they have time to Study, and so by their industry provide themselves, and are not provided of the Lord (such a Ministry is of Works and not the Free Gift from God) such cannot profit People, but lead them captive in an empty and dead Form, always hearing, but never able to come to the true Knowledge of God : Such called Ministers we do deny and turn from them, and testifie against them, as the holy men of God formerly did

I doubt not, Friend Benjamin, but thy Words tend to bring thee to the same Just Contempt, that I have entertained, and that Friends most righteously do entertain of these *uncalled* Priests, and that in the mean time thou wilt, by thy *sober* and weighty Speeches, bring all that wicked Hierarchy, which those Priests so violently contend for, into Contempt among the People.

I am therefore moved to bear my Testimony with thee against them ; forasmuch as they usurping high Dignity and Authority, have erected a Kingdom which they say is the Kingdom of Jesus ; howbeit, as I verily think, it is a Kingdom of this World, forasmuch as they exercise Jurisdictions which be of this World therein, and have taken to themselves Powers which be of themselves ; which nevertheless they take upon them to say, are descended to them, and by the notions and pretences of a Succession of those Powers, they assume a Right to Exercise those Powers over the Consciences of Men, which Friends say they have no Right to do : And furthermore we say and believe, That whereas they Exercise the Power and Authority which alone belongs to King *Jesus*, the King and sole Chief of his faithful



faithful Followers ; they therefore erect their own Kingdom, not the Kingdom of King *Jesus*, and exercise the Authority and Power, which is his only, as their own.

I rejoyce, *Benjamin*, that thou hast published true Doctrine, and hast given thy testimony with us to the Truth, which we on so good and solid Foundations have receiv'd ; and I question not but thou wilt be assisted by the Spirit of Truth to pull down and overthrow the whole Power, Hierarchy and Constitution of that People who call themselves *The Church* ; verily, they are Usurpers of the Kingdom and Throne of King *Jesus* ; and thou shalt be a Champion of the Truth, in that thou shalt overthrow those Ecclesiastick *Principlities* and *Powers*, which are not of God, and shalt establish true Religion in that mighty Principle of Heavenly Light, in which it is only to be found.

This is that inward Revelation which thou hast been obliged to bear thy Testimony unto, (*viz*) That Light which *perswades* the Minds of Men, and whereby every step of Reformation which hath been made in the World, hath been justified, and which, as thou sayest well, is all the Account which Protestants can give for their being reformed from the People call'd *Papists*.

And doubtless thou hast by the same Arguments justified all those, the People of the Lord, who *being perswaded* in themselves of their being guided by Heavenly Light, have separated, and withdrawn from these Usurpations, of which thou hast spoken so worthily.

And what remains, beloved Friend *Benjamin*, but that thou shouldst, according ; as thou hast worthily begun, and according to the Light which shineth in thy Mind, *separate thy self from* these Usurpers of unrighteous Authority, and joining thy self with *the Friends* to Truth, shouldst bear thy Testimony against all Un-  
godli-

godliness; for verily *Benjamin*, thou canst not but see and abhor the Doctrine which these Men teach, saying, We are the Church, and Power is with us; which thou knowest is false, and is not of God, and that the Power which they use is not of God, but is the Power of Men, tending to ungodly Dominion and Usurpation; such as that of the Pope of *Rome*, which nevertheless they have disowned while they yet practice.

For verily, *Benjamin*, it seemeth to me that thou who hast received such Light, and hast acknowledged the Truths which are directly contrary to these Men, canst not any longer continue among them, or wear those prophane Ensigns of Idolatry, whereby thou art distinguished from other Men, even in a manner which thou thy self knowest is not appointed by King *Jesus*: For verily, *Benjamin*, the Robes of Distinction which thou wearest, and wherewith thou art honoured among Men, are the Ensigns of that usurp'd Power which thou hast so worthily condemned, and thou canst not longer abide among those who thou knowest are the Enemies to the Light which thou hast receiv'd, and who walk contrary to the Doctrine which thou hast taught, and which we the Lord's People have so many Years ago receiv'd.

Wherefore I am mov'd to advertise thee, in behalf of the Truth, that thou shouldst not delay any longer joining thy self unto the Lord's People, whose Cause thou hast already so worthily pleaded: For why shouldst thou not cause thy Life and thy Doctrine to conform unto each other? And why shouldst thou decline to profess openly thy adherence to the Lord's People, whilst thou dost not decline to teach the Principles which they believe, and which they have received from the beginning?

It



It is true, *Benjamin*, the mean and humble Station of those who be Teachers and Ministers of the Lord among us, may not be agreeable to thy present Temper, who art exalted to be great among Men; but whereas thou knowest that the Kingdom of *Jesus* is not of this World, and that likewise *his Rewards are not of this World*, as thou hast most worthily taught; so *Benjamin*, how shouldst thou not reject the Honours given by Men, which are the Rewards issuing from that usurped Power which is not according to the Laws of *his Kingdom*! These sincerely, according to thy own Rules, are not of God, neither canst thou, who art now enlightned from a higher Spirit, submit to be deck'd with their Ornaments, but shouldst cast them off, like as Christians in Primitive Times refused to be deck'd with the *Garlands* and *Vestments* of Idolatrous Priests; and like as those People who are called *Protestants*, refuse and detest the Habilitments and Vestments, Titles, Dignities and Distinctions, of the Popish Priests, choosing to be called by the truly venerable Name of *Ministers of Christ*, rather than by the Titles of *Popes, Cardinals, Abbots, Monks, Friars*, and the like.

Forasmuch then as the Usurpers of the Power and Authority of King *Jesus* have manifestly invaded his Crown and Judicatory also, as thou hast said, and have set up Marks of their usurp'd Authority, to wit, their Antichristian *Excommunications, Absolutions, Exorcisms*, and other prophane Practices, and have likewise given Honours, which our Lord and only Sovereign *Jesus Christ* never gave, it seemeth unto me, that thou *Benjamin*, who hast so manfully dethroned their Power and Authority, and hast exposed their Usurpation to such Contempt, or at least hast contemned it in thy Heart, and with the Words of thy Mouth; *I say*, it seemeth unto me that thou canst not receive the Honours given



by that usurped Authority without some Breach upon the aforesaid Declaration of thy Principles, and acting therein contrary to the Light which is within thee.

Furthermore, *Benjamin*, I admonish thee to consider that thou canst not abide in the Truth which thou hast now taught in thy Speaking Place, and published with boldness in Printed Papers, unless thou *comest out* from among that sort of People, of whom thou art said now to be a Ruler ; *forasmuch* as thou hast declared them to be Workers of Iniquity, and Sons of *Belial* : Thy Conscience therefore will not suffer thee to be called any longer by their Name ; neither canst thou be found any longer to own and join thy self unto them : Canst thou, *Benjamin*, be joined unto Usurpers of the Authority of thy Master and King ? Canst thou share his Power, whom thou hast so loudly declared to be the *sole Law-giver* and *Governour* of his Kingdom ? Do not these Men continue their Usurpations ? Do they not continue to claim that Authority which, *as thou hast said*, appertains only to Christ the King ? And thou knowest, *Benjamin*, they will continue to claim the same, and to exercise it, as if it was granted unto them, albeit thou knowest that it is not. Wherefore, O Man, remove thy self speedily from these Men ; yea, I know thou wilt remove thy self from them : For why shouldst thou be found at last in the company of those Men whom thou hast filled with Contempt, *saying*, They are Enemies to the Kingdom of *Jesus* in the World.

Verily, *Benjamin*, thou hast done well in that thou hast openly declared the Iniquity of those who have armed themselves with unlawful Power, and have exercised Tyranny over their Brethren, *saying*, Ye must join with us, otherwise ye shall go to Prison ; or otherwise you shall have no Honour, or Part or Lot among us ; whereas King *Jesus* never left any such Com-

mandment: But it remaineth as a Difficulty, or Doubt, unto us who are Friends, how thou canst, O *Benjamin*, lay a Confederacy with these Men! Art not thou therein an Usurper also with them of the Power and Authority of thy only Lord and King; and that in a much grosser manner than they? Verily, *Benjamin*, if thou come not out from among them, thou wilt give occasion to wicked Men to say of thee, that thou hast said that in thy Teaching Office which thou wilt not put in practice in thy own Person; and they will speak evil words of thee saying, Thou teachest Men to do what thou shunnest to do thy self; and that thou shunnest not those things which thou teachest others to shun and avoid. Moreover, *Benjamin*, Art thou not even at this time, and after the similitude of thine own words, according to thy own Doctrine, an Usurper of the Authority of *King Jesus*, in that thou continuest to exercise that same Power, of which thou hast said that *King Jesus* gave no such Power unto Men, to wit, that profane unlawful Power which those whom Men call Bishops generally exercise over their Brethren, oppressing the Lord's People in their ungodly Courts. Dost thou not preside in thy usurped Judicature, exercising that Power there which thou hast said, *the Lord hath not given thee a Right to exercise*? And dost thou not there make use of those things which thou hast owned to be *Trifles* and *Nullities*, to wit, *Excommunications*, *Absolutions*, and such like things? I say, Dost thou not suffer these things to be done in thy Name, to the Subjects of thy Lord, in those Seats of Evil Men called Ecclesiastick Courts? And how canst thou do this after thou hast so plainly told us, that this is to make thy self King in the stead of thy King Jesus. Nay, Friend *Benjamin*, in this thou hast not done well; forasmuch also, as thou hast sinned herein against the  
Light



Light that is in thee, and hast caused thy Feet to tread aside out of the Path of Truth, which thou hast chalked out for others, that they might walk therein: But I trust that thou wilt be guided by the good Spirit, and by the light of Truth shining in thy Soul, and then thou wilt be sure to come away and remove from the Tents of wickedness.

Wherefore, Friend *Benjamin*, as I know that the Truth hath been spoken by thee, I warn thee, for thy good, that thou come out speedily from among them; lay down thy painted Vestments, and prophane Trinkets, the Ensigns of that Usurpation upon thy Lord and Master's Kingdom, which thou hast so faithfully born thy Testimony against; *I say*, I exhort thee to lay them down speedily, and come out from among them forthwith, *joining thy self unto us*, whose Principles thou hast acknowledged: So shall thy Life and Doctrine be Uniform, and thou shalt be sure to deserve that Blessing which attends those who are not ashamed to Practice the things which they Profess.

Likewise, *Benjamin*, this will enable thee to overcome the Gain-sayers; for behold they do already upbraid thee herewith; and verily the Man called *Andrew Snape*, hath spoken unto thee Words of scorning with boldness, in a Book which he stileth, a Letter written unto thee; and in the Twenty and Fifth Page thereof, that *if the Case be as thou hast said, it is the Men called Parsons, have nothing more to do but to throw up their Orders, since their Church hath no need of them, and since they not only do no Service, but are Guilty of a Criminal Usurpation.*

Likewise hath the same *Andrew Snape* said unto thee in his said Book, and in the Thirty and Sixth Page thereof, these words, *to wit*, That he doth not see how, *upon these Principles, thou canst take thy place in the*

*Provincial Sanhedrim of the Priests, or how thou canst require Subscriptions or Declarations of those of the Sons of the Prophets whom thou dost admit to the Priesthood among thy People, or how thou canst Exercise almost any Act of Episcopal Jurisdiction.*

Now verily, *Benjamin*, albeit the same *Andrew Snape* is a Man by his Profession in an evil way, and such as I allow not to be according to the Truth; yet nevertheless herein hath he spoken unto thee words which thou shouldst consider well of; for that they are of weight unto thee, *to wit*, That thou shouldst separate thy self from Evil-doers, whose ways thou knowest to be wrong; and that whereas thou hast condemned them for Usurpation, and Invasion of the Kingdom of *King Jesus*, thou shouldst not at the same time continue among them, or sit in thy Seat in their Assemblies.

Moreover, it seemeth unto me, *Benjamin*, that whereas thou hast replied to *Andrew Snape* in harsh Words, saying, That he hath evil entreated thee, and hath written bitter things against thee, and things which favour not of Truth; yet nevertheless, I perceive that thou hast not said one word unto him to Gain say what he hath told thee concerning thy coming out from among them, or that thou canst not, by thy own Principles, take thy Seat in the Assembly of thy Priests; wherefore I rejoice in thy behalf, nothing doubting but that thou wilt come and join thy self with the Lord's People, who are Friends unto the Truth. and unto all that thou hast said of the Usurpation of Men, and as I have already given thee to understand, have many Years received the Truths which thou hast Preached at this day.

Neither let it grieve thee, Friend *Benjamin*, that thou shalt relinquish the things which Men call Honours and Greatness, and shalt lose thereby the Advantages and  
Profits



Profits which thou dost now receive ; forasmuch as thou knowest that the Rewards of the Kingdom of *Jesus* are *not of this World* ; and if the Rewards of this World are the Sanctions of the Kingdom whereof thou hast spoken, then it is not of *Jesus* : So that thou shalt only relinquish the Rewards of this World, and shalt seek the Rewards of that Kingdom which is not of this World.

These things being so naturally drawn from thy own words, I trust thou wilt not Hesitate thereat, but wilt accept of my wholesome Advice, and shew thy self not to be ashamed of the practising those things whereof thou hast testify'd, *saying*, That they are True.

Neither canst thou, Friend *Benjamin*, be in danger of joyning with any other People than those, whose Profession I have here invited thee to ; since there are not any who have received the Truths which thou hast Preached in their full Degrees, so as the People, who in contempt are called *Quakers* ; with whom, as I have shewed, thou hast perfectly conformed thy self to the Honour of thy Judgment, and of the divine Light shewing forth in thee.

As for those People called *Presbyterians*, thou canst by no means joyn thy self unto them, seeing they have declared themselves in Terms greatly opposite to thy Doctrines, saying, That Men have Power to make Laws, binding the Consciences of others ; and that Rewards and Punishments of this World appertain to Humane Authority, exercised by such as they call a Succession of Officers : These their Opinions are not according to Truth, as Friends have received it ; neither are they like unto those Truths which thou hast Preached : And therefore we see that questionless thou wilt avoid also the Erroneous Opinions of Persecuting *Presbyterians*, and wilt joyn thy self unto us ; and this I speak unto thee

thee with the more certainty, *forasmuch*, as, Blessed be the Lord, thou art already come beyond the corrupt Tenents of those People : Moreover, beloved Friend *Benjamin*, I make known unto thee, that the said *Presbyterians* are equally guilty of those things which the People of the Lord abhor ; *to wit*, The pretences to a Power, which, as thou said well, *Jesus* the King of all those who are led by the light of the Truth, never delegated to them ; and this they not only give to their Followers, but make Laws of their own ; *I say*, Humane Laws, and Sanctions of Laws, such as Rewards and Punishments, for enforcing others to comply therewith ; *to wit*, That they admit none to be Teachers among them, or to Preach and Prophecy unto the People, unless they profess to believe and to receive certain Points which they call *prophanely*, Articles of Faith ; wherein these wicked Usurpations of Power are openly declared by them, saying,

1. “ That the Lord Jesus, as King and Head of the Church, hath therein appointed a Government in the hand of Church-Officers distinct from the Civil Magistrate.

2. “ That to these Officers the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven are committed ; by Vertue whereof they have Power respectively to Retain and Remit Sins, to shut that Kingdom against the Impenitent, both by the Word and Censures, and to open it unto penitent Sinners, by the Ministry of the Gospel, and by Absolution from Censures, as occasion shall require.

“ That these Church Censures are necessary, &c. for preventing the wrath of God, which might fall upon the Church, if they suffer the Seal of the Covenant to be prophaned by Notorious and Obstinate Offenders.

These things thou knowest, *Benjamin*, are contrary



to the Doctrines and Positions which thou hast so openly avowed, being no less than Invasions, and manifest Usurpations, of the Kingdom and Authority of King Jesus, and in themselves *Nullities* and *Trifles*.

Yet these things, and in these Words, thou wilt find in those *Heads of Belief*, which these ungodly *Presbyterians* call the Confession of their Faith, *Article the XXX*. Howbeit, Blessed art thou, O *Benjamin*, in that thou hast born thy Testimony also. Wherefore I know, that leaving behind thee all these wicked and erroneous Opinions, and bearing witness to the Truth, thou wilt at length joyn thy self unto us; and I rejoyce over thee in this, that thou art inlightned to know the Truth; Testifying, that I embrace thee with Affection in the Lord.

Friend *Timothy* Greeteth thee in like manner; as also *James* the Aged, a Lover of those who forsake the Errors of the Wicked: In a word, all Friends Greet, and speak well of thee.

*Fare thee well.*

F I N I S.





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